

out the perpendicular, so that the pit is made one or two feet wider at bottom than at top. The usual firm texture will prevent any danger from this overhanging shape, and several advantages will be gained from it. It gives more space for work—prevents the wheels running on the lowest and wettest parts—allows more earth to be disposed of, in opening for the next pit—and prevents the earth tumbling into the next digging when the separating wall of marl is cut away. The upper drain of the pit, which takes the surface of water, will hang over the one below, kept for the oozing water. The first remains unaltered throughout the job, and may still convey the stream, when six feet above the heads of the laborers in the pit. The lower drain of course sinks with the digging. Should the pit be dug deeper than the level of the receiving ditch can be sunk, a wall should be left between, and the remainder of the oozing water must be conducted to a little basin near the wall, and thence baled or pumped into the receiving ditch. The passage for the carts to ascend from the pit should be kept on a suitable slope—and the marl forming that slope may be cut out in small pits, after the balance has been completed.”

“If the marl is so situated that carts cannot be driven as low as the bottom, then the area must be cut out in small pits beginning at the back part, and extending as they proceed, towards the road leading out of the pit.”

These directions, of which doubtless avail may be taken on many places in Maryland, are the result of the experience of a gentleman well known to have devoted much time and attention to the subject. There are other circumstances, however, that should be attended to in preparing a pit from which marl is to be drawn. In the preceding section, it was stated that the upper portion of a marl deposit sometimes consists of a thick incrustation, occasioned by causes then explained. This, as a matter of course, should be removed. It has also been stated, that the species of shells occurring in a deposit, vary. In some localities that have been examined, they are disposed in strata, each stratum containing a predominance of one kind of fossils. Thus some strata contain nearly all scallops, some nearly all oyster, or nearly